

WIGMORE HALL

Tuesday 31 December 2024
7.00pm

The King's Singers

Patrick Dunachie countertenor
Edward Button countertenor
Julian Gregory tenor
Christopher Bruerton baritone
Nick Ashby baritone
Jonathan Howard bass

Trad/English

Lamorna arranged by Goff Richards

Orlande de Lassus (c.1530-1594)

Chi chilichi
Toutes les nuitz (pub. 1563)
Dessus le marché d'Arras (pub. 1584)

Bob Chilcott (b.1955)

Thou, my love, art fair

Hugo Alfvén (1872-1960)

Aftonen (1942)

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)

Over Hill, Over Dale from 3 Shakespeare Songs

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

Die Nacht D983c

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921)

Saltarelle Op. 74

Orlande de Lassus

Musica Dei donum optimi

Alma Bazel Androzzo (1912-2001)

If I can help somebody (1946) arranged by Stacey V Gibbs

John Cameron

O, chi, chi mi na mòrbheanna (1856) arranged by James MacMillan

Quirino Mendoza y Cortés (1862-1957)

Cielito lindo arranged by Jorge Cózatl

Interval

Cabaret with The King's Singers

A surprise selection of songs from The King's Singers' beloved close-harmony library

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Tonight's programme is many things: a return to one of our favourite venues in the world, with a hall full of friends and family; a celebration of New Year's Eve, bringing 2024 to a musical close. It's also the concert at which we bid farewell to Johnny Howard, our bass of 14 years, and therefore also the final concert of this incarnation of The King's Singers. The musical programme we've chosen is therefore a curious cocktail of all these elements: it's celebratory in a way which befits the 31 December; it's a tribute to the library and story of The King's Singers past and present; it's peppered with handpicked requests by Johnny - like a programmatic Last Will and Testament; and it's a musical toast to some of the beautiful memories and proud moments we have from six years and 440 concerts together, as the group's second-longest-serving formation.

The programme starts with a whimsical prelude. It's an early arrangement for the group, by Goff Richards (1944-2011), of the Cornish folksong 'Lamorna', which is a slapstick tale of mistaken identity during a taxi ride on a rainy evening. The arrangement - from the early 1980s - tosses the melody around the voice parts and fires off the text at lightning speed in a way which was something of a trademark for the group in its early days on BBC television.

With predictable unpredictability, our next section sees us rewind several hundred years to the music of **Orlande de Lassus** (c.1533-1594), which has always had a special place within our programming. There's something of an affinity between our group and Lassus, with the latter spending his whole life travelling itinerantly between European capitals, singing and composing in many different languages and styles, engaging both with high art for the church and popular culture for the pub. The four Lassus works in tonight's performance take us across his musical spectrum: 'In Dessus le marche d'Arras', a simple and distinctive musical theme is passed the voice parts at various pitches, while the text tells the story of a soldier trying to buy himself a good time in the marketplace. 'Chi chilichi' is an eccentric tale of an old Italian pervert musician pestering a young girl by playing on his hurdy-gurdy. Contrasting the text, the music is predominantly in a grand and luxuriant six-part texture. 'Toutes les nuits' is a little closer to what one might imagine a piece by Lassus to sound like: beautiful interweaving polyphonic lines, giving voice to artful French poetry about a man longing to lie next to his absent lover. At the other end of the Lassus style-spectrum is 'Musica, Dei donum optimi', which he wrote during his time as head of chapel music in the royal court of Munich. This masterwork (which sits on its own, later in tonight's programme) is in the high sacred style; its text, which comes in three short chapters, tells of the divine gift of music with its power to calm and soothe even the fiercest men and beasts. Lassus' own writing in this piece proves that point as perfectly as anything could. The magical extended silence which followed one of our performances of this piece, at a choral convention in 2015, will live long in the group's memory.

Another piece close to the group's heart is **Bob Chilcott's** setting of 'Thou my love art fair', which was

commissioned in honour of the group's dear friends and supporters Jerry and Cathie Fischer. Bob was a member of The King's Singers from 1985-1997, is still a close friend to us, and our library is blessed with lots of his work. 'Thou my love art fair' - which is an intimate love song as much as a sacred poem - has been performed at many significant events in the group's life, since it was written in 2014.

The next set of songs takes us into the 19th and 20th centuries, and are taken from our forthcoming album *Such stuff as dreams are made on*, which will be Johnny's final release with the group, released in the first half of 2025. The set of songs we've selected for tonight gives a survey of some of the beautiful but often dark pastoral scenes favoured by composers of the Romantic and post-Romantic era — particularly those who affected and influenced by the world wars of 1914-1945. Tonight's pieces create a sequence of nature-focussed tableaux: sunset in the Swedish hills in **Hugo Alfvén's** (1872-1960) 'Aftonen', fairies flying over the English countryside in **Vaughan Williams's** (1872-1958) 'Over hill, over dale' from his *Three Shakespeare Songs*, the perfect stillness of a German night in **Schubert's** (1797-1828) 'Die Nacht', and an outdoor party in springtime France, on the eve of Lent in **Saint-Saëns's** (1835-1921) 'Saltarelle'.

The final fully-programmed sequence, which ends the first half of the programme, is taken from our 2020 project 'Finding Harmony'. This was an album and programme which aimed to demonstrate the extraordinary role music has played at key turning points in history, often aiding social change as a means of peaceful protest. This power of music, to bring people together despite differences, has become a key motivation guiding what we do artistically and with our Global Foundation. For the 'Finding Harmony' project, we invited composers from around the world to arrange iconic songs from their countries and traditions, to help us tell some of these extraordinary socio-musical stories on our travels. The three arrangements in tonight's programme take us from the earthquakes of Mexico City in 2017 with 'Cielito lindo', to the music of the civil rights movement in the USA ('If I can help somebody') in the 1960s, via the highlands of Scotland ('O chi, chi mi na mòrbheanna'), where Gaelic language and music was threatened during the Highland Clearances.

After the interval, we'll be back - fortified by a cup of tea and a cry - with a selection of the group's signature close harmony arrangements. There'll be some brand new ones written bespoke for this line up of voices, and there'll be some arrangements from the very earliest days of our group when its sound was being honed and formed with brilliant collaborators such as Gordon Langford and Daryl Runswick. We can't be totally sure what we'll choose, and Johnny will certainly have a strong hand in the selections, and as is the spirit of a cabaret, you can wait and see: there'll be something for everyone!

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Trad/English

Lamorna

arranged by Goff Richards

I'll sing to you a song
It's about a lady fair
I met the other evening
At the corner of the square
Her hair hung down in curls
She was a charming rover
We rowed all night
In the pale moonlight
Way down to Lamorna

Twas down is Albert Square
I never shall forget
Her eyes, they shone like diamonds
And the evening it was wet, wet, wet
Her hair hung down in curls
She was a charming rover
We rowed all night
In the pale moonlight
Way down to Lamorna

As she got in the car
I asked her for her name
And when she gave it me
Well, mine it was the same
So I lifted up her veil
Her face was covered over
To my surprise
It was my wife
I took down to Lamorna

She said I knew you now
I knew you all along
I knew you in the dark
But I did it for a lark
And for that lark you'll pay,
for the taking of the Donah
You'll pay the fare for riding there
Way down to Lamorna

Orlande de Lassus (c.1530-1594)

Chi chilichi

Chi chilichi? Cucurucu!	"Who's crowing chilichi? - "Cucurucu"
U, scontienta, U, beschina, U, sportunata, me Lucia!	O, unhappy, o, miserable, O, unfortunate me, Lucia!
Non sienta Martina galla cantara?	Don't you hear Martino, your cock, singing?"
Lassa canta, possa clepare!	"Struth, your song can go to hell,
Porca te, piscia sia cicata!	You pig, you sh*tface!

la dormuta, tu scitata.	I was asleep, now you've woken me!
Ba con dia, non bo più per namolata.	Go with God, I am not in love any longer."
Tutta la notte tu dormuta Mai a me tu basciata	"You slept all night long, Never once did you give me a kiss."
Cucurucu! Cucurucu!	"Cucurucu, cucurucu!"
Che papa la sagna Metter' ucelli entr' a gaiola	"If Papa knew, Birds like you would land in jail.
Cucurucu, cucurucu!	"Cucurucu, cucurucu!"
Leva da loco, Piglia Zampogna	"Get away from here, go and squeeze your bagpipe,
Va sonando per chissa cantuna.	Go and sing your song to someone else."
Lirum li, lirum li	"Lirum lirum... li!"

"Sona, se vuoi sonare!"	"Then play, if you have to!"
Lassa carumpa canella	"Oh, for pity's sake, you dog!
Lassa Martina, Lassa Lucia! U, madonna, aticilum barbuni	Alas, Martino, alas, Lucia! O, My Lady, to thy heaven,
U, macera catutuni, Sona, son'o non gli dare,	O, grind it up." "Play, play, but don't give him anything!"
Lirum li, lirum li. (La moglie del peccoraro: Sette pecore a no danaro: Se ce fussa Caroso mio Cinco peccore a no carlino:)	"Lirum li, lirum li" The shepherd's wife Has seven sheep and no money; If it was my beloved, There'd be five sheep and not a farthing.
Auza la gamba, madonna Lucia	Raise your leg, my lady Lucia
Stiendi la mano, Piglia Zampogna	Reach me your hand, take the bagpipe,
Sauta non poco con mastro Martino.	Have a good romp with Master Martino!"
Lirum li, lirum li.	"Lirum, lirum li..."

Please do not turn the page until the piece and its accompaniment have ended.

Toutes les nuitz (pub. 1563)
Clément Marot

Toutes les nuitz que sans
vous je me couche,
Pensant à vous ne fay que
sommeiller,
Et en revant jusques au
resveiller
Incessemment vous quiers
parmi la couche,
Et bien souvent au lieu de
vostre bouche
En soupirant je baise
l'oreiller.

Every night

Every night that I sleep
without you,
thinking of you makes me
want only to slumber,
so as to dream of you
until awakening
seeking you incessantly
in the bed,
and often in place of your
mouth
with a sigh I kiss the
pillow.

Dessus le marché d'Arras (pub. 1584)
Anonymous

Dessus le marché d'Arras
Mire li, mire la
bon bas
Je trouvais un espagnard.
Sentin, senta, sur la bon
bas Mire li, mire la bon bille
Mire li, mire la bon bas

By the marketplace in
Arras, *Mire li, mire la
bon bas*
I met a Spaniard. Sentin,
senta, sur la bon bas
Mire li, mire la bon bille
Mire li, mire la bon bas

Il m'a dit: 'Fille écoute,' Mire li,
mire la
bon bas
'De l'argent on vous don'ra.'
Sentin, senta, sur la bon
bas Mire li, mire la bon bille
Mire li, mire la
bon bas

He said to me, 'Listen,
maid, *Mire li, mire la
bon bas*
I will give you money.'
*Sentin, senta, sur la bon
bas Mire li, mire la bon
bille Mire li, mire la bon
bas*

Bob Chilcott (b.1955)

Thou, my love, art fair

For fair, because thine eyes
Lo, thou, my love, art fair;
Myself have made thee so:
Yea, thou art fair indeed,
Wherefore thou shalt not need
In beauty to despair;
For I accept thee so,
For fair.

Are like the culvers' white,
Whose simpleness in deed
All others do exceed:
Thy judgement wholly lies
In true sense of sprite
Most wise.

Hugo Alfvén (1872-1960)

Aftonen (1942)
Herman Säterberg

Skogen står tyst, himlen är klar.	Still the woods, radiant the heav'ns.
Hör, huru tjusande vallhornet.lullar.	Dim, distant horns fill the air with their echo.
Kvällsolns bloss sig stilla sänker,	Sunset, glowing, slowly disappearing,
Sänker sig ner uti den lugna, klara våg.	it disappears beneath the sea.
Ibland dälder, gröna kullar	Through the mountains, through the valleys
Eko kring neiden far...	lingering, the echoes sound...

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)

3 Shakespeare Songs

Over Hill, Over Dale

Over hill, over dale,
Thorough bush, thorough briar,
Over park, over pale,
Thorough flood, thorough fire
I do wander everywhere.
wifter than the moonè's sphere;
And I serve the fairy queen,
To dew her orbs upon the green.
The cowslips tall her pensioners be;
In their gold coats spots you see;
Those be rubies, fairy favours,
In those freckles live their savours:
I must go seek some dew-drops here,
And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear.

Franz Schubert (1797-1828)

Die Nacht D983c
*Friedrich Adolf
Krummacher*

The Night

Wie schön bist du, Freundliche Stille, himmlische Ruh! -	How beautiful you are, friendly calm, heavenly peace!
Sehet, wie die klaren Sterne Wandeln in des Himmels Auen,	See how the lucid stars wander in the pastures of the sky
Und auf uns hernieder schauen,	and look down upon us
Schweigend aus der blauen Ferne.	silently out of the blue distance.

Wie schön bist du, Freundliche Stille, himmlische Ruh! - Schweigend naht des Lenzes Milde Sich der Erde weichem Schooß, Kränzt den Silberquell mit Moos, Und mit Blumen die Gefilde.	How beautiful you are, friendly calm, heavenly peace! The mildness of Spring draws silently nearer to the earth's soft bosom, crowning the silver stream with garlands of moss, and the fields with flowers.
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Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921)

Saltarelle Op. 74

Venez, enfants de la Romagne, Tous chantant de gais refrains, Quittez la plaine et la montagne Pour danser aux tambourins.	Come, children of the Romagne, All singing gay refrains, Leave the plains and the mountains, To dance to the beat of the tambourines!
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Rome, la sainte vous les donne, Ces plaisirs que la madonne, De son chêne vous pardonne, Se voilant quand il le faut.	Rome, the holy city, gives them to you, Those pleasures that the Madonna From her oak tree pardons you, Veiling herself when necessary.
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Le carnaval avec son masque, Ses paillettes sur la basque, Ses grelots, son cri fantasque, Met les sbires en défaut.	The masked carnival, Sequined bodices, Bells, fantastic cry, Throws the police off the scent.
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Frappons le sol d'un pied sonore! Dans nos mains frappons encore! La nuit vient et puis l'aurore, Rien n'y fait dansons toujours!	Let us stamp our feet And clap our hands! Night comes, and then the dawn. There is nothing to do but keep dancing!
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Plus d'un baiser s'échappe et vole; Se plaint-on? la danse folle, Coupe aux mères la parole, C'est tout gain pour les amours.	More than one kiss escapes and flies off. Do we complain? The wild dance Makes mothers speechless. So much the better for love.
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Le bon curé, qui pour nous suivre, Laisse tout, mais qui sait vivre, Ne voit rien avec son livre, De ce qu'il ne doit pas voir.	The good priest, who, to follow us, Leaves everything, but knows how to live, Sees nothing, glued to his book, Of what he should not see.
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Mais quoi! Demain les Camadules Sortiront de leurs cellules; Puis, carême, jeûne et bulles, Sur la ville vont pleuvoir.	But what! Tomorrow the Camaldules Will come out of their cells; Then Lent, fasting and bubbling, Will rain over the town!
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Orlande de Lassus

Musica Dei donum optimi

Musica Dei donum optimi, Trahit homines, trahit deos. Musica truces mollit animos Tristesque mentes erigit, Vel ipsas arbores Et horridas movet feras.	Music, the gift of the most great God, Moves the hearts of men and moves the gods. Music soothes the most savage breasts, And uplifts the saddest minds. Music moves the very trees And even moves wild beasts.
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Alma Bazel Androzzo (1912-2001)

If I can help somebody (1946)

arranged by Stacey V Gibbs

Alma Bazel Androzzo

If I can help somebody, as I pass along,
If I can cheer somebody, with a word or song ...

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accompaniment have ended.*

John Cameron

O, chì, chì mi na mòrbheanna

arranged by James MacMillan

O chi, chi mi na mòrbheanna,	Oh, I see, I see the great mountains,
O chi, chi mi na corrbheana,	Oh I see, I see the lofty mountains,
O chi, chi mi na coireachan,	Oh I see, I see the corries,
Chi mi na sgorran fo cheo.	I see the peaks beneath the mist.
Chi mi gun dail an t-aite 's an d'rugadh mi,	I see straight away the place of my birth,
Cuirear orm failt' 's a' chanain a thuigeas mi,	I will be welcomed in a language that I understand,
Gheibh mi ann aoidh agus gradh 'n uair ruigeam,	I will have hospitality and love when I reach there,
Nach reicinn air thunnaichean oir.	For that I would not trade tons of gold.
Chi mi ann coilltean, chi mi ann doireachan,	I see woods there, I see thickets,
Chi mi ann maghan bana is toraiche,	I see fair and fertile lands there,
Chi mi na feidh air lar nan coireachan,	I see the deer on the ground of the corries,
Falaicht' an trusgan de cheo.	Shrouded in a blanket of mist.

Quirino Mendoza y Cortés (1862-1957)

Cielito lindo

arranged by Jorge Cózatl

De la Sierra Morena cielito lindo vienen bajando,	From the Sierra Morena are coming down, pretty baby,
Un par de ojitos negros cielito lindo de contrabando,	A pair of little black eyes of contraband, pretty baby.
Ay, ay, ay, ay, canta y no llores!	Ay, ay, ay, ay, sing and don't cry!
Porque cantando se alegran cielito lindo los corazones.	Because singing "pretty baby" makes hearts happy.
Ese lunar que tienes cielito lindo junto a la boca,	That mole that you have next to your mouth, pretty baby,
No se lo des a nadie cielito lindo que a mí me toca,	Do not give it to anyone, pretty baby; that belongs to me.
Ay, ay, ay, ay, canta y no llores!	Ay, ay, ay, ay, sing and don't cry!
Porque cantando se alegran cielito lindo los corazones	Because singing "pretty baby" makes hearts happy.

Cuando sales al prado, niña de amores	When you go out to the meadow, girl of loves,
Se inclinan a besarte todas las flores,	All the flowers bend to kiss you.
Se inclinan a besarte toditas bellas	They are all beautifully inclined to kiss you
Porque tu eres la reina de todas ellas.	Because you are the queen of them all.
Una flecha en el aire tiró cupido	Cupid shot an arrow in the air;
Y la tiró jugando y a mí me ha "herío", (herido)	He threw it playing and it has "hurt" me,
Fue una flecha en el alma, mortal herida	It was an arrow to the soul, a mortal wound
Que si tú no la curas, pierdo la vida.	That if you don't cure, I'll lose my life.
Tierra de los Aztecas cielito lindo que Dios nos hizo	Land of the Aztecs that God made for us, pretty baby,
Son estas tres huastecas cielito lindo un paraíso,	They are three Huastecas, pretty baby, a paradise.
Ay, ay, ay, ay son tres hermanas,	Ay, ay, ay, ay, they're three sisters,
La Huasteca hidalguense, la potosina y veracruzana.	The Huastecas from Hidalgo, from Potosí and from Veracruz.

Árbol de la esperanza mantente firme	Tree of hope, stay strong,
Que no lloren tus ojos al despedirme	Don't let your eyes cry when I say goodbye.
Que no lloren te pido porque si miro	Don't let them cry, I ask you, because if I see
Lagrimas en tus ojos no me despido.	Tears in your eyes, I won't leave

De domingo a domingo cielito lindo te vengo a ver,	From Sunday to Sunday, pretty baby, I'll come to see you.
¿Cuándo será domingo cielito lindo para volver?	When will it be Sunday, cielito lindo, so I can come back?

Translation of 'Die Nacht' by George Bird and Richard Stokes from The Fischer-Dieskau Book of Lieder.

Interval

Cabaret with The King's Singers - a surprise selection of songs from The King's Singers' beloved close-harmony library